

PLANNED GAPS IN SERVICE

(Applies to all Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Families)

Activity 405 –Planned Gap in Service – Has been removed from the activity drop down choices. There is now a separate link [Planned Gap] located next to the [Activity Report] link.

A Planned Gap should only be used for participants whose services need to be interrupted for health/medical reasons or while they are waiting for a planned training element to begin. It is not to be used as “holding” while waiting to see if the participant finds a job or as a means of keeping youth participants active between summer components. Once the decision has been made to place an individual into a Planned Gap in Service, click on the Planned Gap link and complete all fields with a red arrow.

- **Planned Gap Type:** The list box shows the two allowable reasons for a Planned Gap in Services. The first reason listed is “Delay before training.” The only other reason for placing an individual into a Planned Gap is “Health/Medical.” If the reason for the Planned Gap is “Health/Medical,” it should be selected. If not the system will default to “Delay Before Training” and the information entered into the system will be inaccurate.
- **Start Date:** This date cannot be more than 60 days old. The system will not allow backdating past the 60 day mark (60 days from the date staff are trying to enter it).

Estimated End of Planned Gap: This date indicates how long the individual would be in a “holding status.” DWD has determined that Planned Gaps can only be set in 60-day increments and have at least one activity posted between planned gap periods. There is no limit to the number of planned gaps that can be used.

During the time the individual will be in this “Planned Gap in Services,” no services can be provided. Therefore, the registration and all activities will not be accessible. The only links available relative to the registration will be [Details], [Activity Report], [Planned Gap] and [Exit].

The computer will automatically insert an actual End Date on every activity still displaying an estimated end date. (The actual end date will be the date the Planned Gap begins.)

To remove an individual from “Planned Gap in Service,” use the following steps:

- click on the [Planned Gap] link
- click on the [Close] link
- enter the date the Planned Gap is ending.

Once the Gap has ended in Toolbox, the registration data will reappear. All activities prior to the Gap are locked, and staff will need to enter a new activity. The pending soft exit will now be calculated 90 days from the begin date of the new activity. If no new activities are

entered, the registration will soft exit 90 days from the last activity end date. The exit date will roll back to the last activity end date.

Please note the locking of “prior to gap” activities will only occur on newly entered Planned Gaps. This function is not applied to past planned gaps (those converted over the weekend) so that errors can be corrected as needed.

If staff do not deliberately end the Planned Gap by following the steps above, the registration will reactivate on the “estimated end date” of the Planned Gap and the Pending Soft Exit countdown will begin. It is advisable that counselors continually review the [Planned Gap] listing that can be found on the WIA reports (region page next to the [Counselors] link) for any records that will be coming out of a Planned Gap.

After 90 days of no service, the law requires that records be soft exited. By only allowing Planned Gaps in 60-day increments, the risk of the “old” 90-day Planned Gaps ending and immediately soft exiting are avoided. At the end of the 60-day Planned Gap, staff still have time (30 days) to enter an activity to keep the record active.

In order to extend the period of no services (by entering a new Planned Gap) beyond the original 60 days, staff must:

- close the gap
- enter a case management activity (105 or 205) and indicate in case notes that the client was contacted to determine the feasibility of returning for services. The 105 or 205 activities must have an actual end date.
- click on [Planned Gap] and open a new one.
- enter the “begin” and “estimated end” dates of the new Planned Gap.

Staff will not be able to extend the period of time of “no services” without entering the 105 or 205 activity and documenting contact with the customer.

Here are some helpful hints on the use of a planned gap.

1. The only two reasons allowable for using a Planned Gap.

- Health/Medical
- Awaiting Training

Staff must document in the “case notes” why they are placing the individual into a Planned Gap. If staff extend the period of no services beyond the original estimated time needed, they must also document the reason for creating another Planned Gap in the case notes.

2. No WIA services are to be provided during a Planned Gap. This includes WIA funded Supportive Services. However, non- WIA funded services can be provided.

3. Do not place an individual into a Planned Gap if they receiving non-WIA funded training such as Trade Act/NAFTA or Vocational Rehabilitation funded training. The appropriate steps are as follows:

- Contact the Trade/NAFTA or Vocational Rehabilitation counselor and determine the dates that training will occur.
- Enter the 300 level training activity on the Toolbox registration but choose the Trade Act/NAFTA or Vocational Rehabilitation funding bucket. Enter the begin date and estimated end date based on the information received from the partner counselor.
- Once the training has ended, enter the credential (if applicable) on the [Outcomes] link.
- Continue to serve the client with WIA funds or Exit the individual from the program.

If staff place an individual at the Intensive level into a Planned Gap rather than enter the “training” activity with a Trade/NAFTA or Vocational Rehabilitation funding, the Region will not be able to count the credential should they receive one. This does not apply to Older Youth, as they are not subject to the Core, Intensive, or Training level requirements of WIA.

4. Younger Youth who are registered in WIA are not to be put into a Planned Gap to cover the school year. WIA does not recognize the old JTPA “Summer Youth Programs.” A youth registered in WIA should be served year round. The only reasons for using a Planned Gap are Health/Medical and Awaiting Training. The “summer youth” philosophy does not qualify for either of these reasons.
5. Planned Gaps while “awaiting training,” in many cases are not even necessary. A soft exit occurs when a participant goes more than 90 days without a service. If someone has 45 days to wait from the ending of the last activity until training begins, they will not exceed 90 days without service and therefore would not need to be placed into a Planned Gap to cover a period of no service.

Planned Gaps are intended to keep a registration from automatically soft-exiting. Remember, the soft-exit clock is based on the:

- registration date (if no activities are provided),
- begin date of an activity (if no end date has been placed on the record) and
- actual end date of the last activity provided

In the same manner, a Planned Gap for Health/Medical or Awaiting Training should only be used when: the end date of an activity, the begin date of an activity or the registration date (with no activities) would exceed the 90 days that would trigger a soft exit.

If you have questions relative to the impact of a Planned Gap on performance please contact Michael Waltman at (573) 526-8267.

If you have a question relative to Youth Program issues as they relate to a Planned Gap, please contact Bev Kelsey at (573) 526-8259 or Robert Ruble at (573) 526-8258.

If you have a question relative to Adult/Dislocated Worker Program issues as they relate to a Planned Gap, please contact Don Rahm at (573) 526-8268.

If you have questions relative to the preference that your WIB has in the handling of these situations, please contact your WIB representative.

If you have questions relative to monitoring issues as they relate to a Planned Gap, please contact Lindell Thurman at (573) 526-8241 or Tom Reed at (573) 526-8240.

Toolbox related questions should be addressed to Colleen MacEachen at (573) 751-2220.